

Task Force C Meeting Summary

Monday, September 19, 2005

Participants: Cheryl Kobernik (Chair) – North Star Organics, Kenyatta Brame – Sysco Grand Rapids, Elaine Brown – Michigan Food and Farming Systems, Melinda Curtis – Select Michigan, Ben Kudwa – Michigan Potato Industry Commission, Christine Lietzau – MI Department of Agriculture: Select Michigan, Gatha McClellan – MI Department of Corrections, Marla Moss – MI Department of Education, Patrice Murdock – Brighton Public Schools, and Louis Vescio – MI Food and Beverage Association.

The second Task Force C: Promoting Michigan Foods meeting convened Monday, September 19, 2005 from 1:30pm – 4:00pm at Constitution Hall in Lansing. Council Member Cheryl Kobernik chaired the meeting.

Ms. Kobernik called the meeting to order at 1:30pm and welcomed the Task Force Participants and those present introduced themselves. Ms. Kobernik briefly reviewed the objectives and activities agreed upon during the first meeting, how Task Forces fit into the MFPC structure, and logistical issues for the November meeting.

Kristin Brooks, MFPC staff person, explained the recommendation process for the Task Forces and Council in general. The charge of the Council and in turn the Task Forces are to make policy and program recommendations to the Governor that improve the state's food system. Task Force C is responsible for developing, discussing and approving recommendations relating to promoting Michigan foods for the Council's review. At each meeting there will be standing proposed recommendations to discuss and potentially approve as well as address new recommendations proposed by participants, other Council Members, presenters, or staff. Discussing and approving recommendations at each meeting will ensure that timely recommendations are reported to the Governor throughout the process.

Ms. Kobernik invited Christine Lietzau and Melinda Curtis to briefly discuss the Select Michigan program and recommendations for the Task Force to consider. Ms. Curtis explained the program's scope and accomplishments and struggles with consistent funding. Participants discussed options for and levels of funding for the program. There are potentially several federal grants that require state-matching funds funneled through various state departments that could be sought to support Select Michigan. Participants were in agreement that state supplied bridge money is necessary to keep the program running until other funding sources can be secured.

The three proposed recommendations developed for the meeting relating to Select Michigan were:

- Provide bridge funding for 2006 to allow time to create sustainable funding for the program and long-term strategic goals.
- Create an edict from that all state departments will preferentially sources Michigan products when available.
- Establish redundant food systems.

After discussing all three, participants decided to spend more time in future meetings on aspects of the second and third recommendations and to fine-tune the first recommendation, given its timeliness, and move it out for consideration at the next full Council meeting in October. After much debate, participants decided to ask for \$250,000 to support the program for one year while additional funding opportunities can be secured. The recommendation was revised to state:

- Recommend the state of Michigan provide \$250,000 in bridge funding for the Select Michigan program for 2006 to allow time to identify sustainable funding and long-term strategic goals for the program.

Other issues touched on during the meeting included:

- The Michigan Department of Management and Budget's role in food bids and procurement.
- Distribution and procurement for commercial institutions like grocery stores and restaurants.
- The relationship between local food systems and state programs such as Select Michigan.

Participants agreed that the focus of the next Task Force C meeting will be on state institutional procurement and purchasing highlighting issues with schools and correctional facilities. The next meeting is scheduled for **Monday, November 7, 2005 from 2:30pm – 5:00pm**, Constitution Hall, Lansing.